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It covers (1) U.S. Federal government documents, especially those from executive branch departments and those from the Congressional branch - - Committees, the U.S. General Accounting Office, and the Congressional Budget Office; (2) policy briefs from major private think tanks, especially those in Washington; and (3) major reports from national professional associations. A few new high quality, high relevance think tank-sponsored books are also listed.

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Reports

Item#1

America Reaches Its Demographic Tipping Point. Brookings Institution. William H. Frey. August 26, 2011.

The latest wave of 2010 Census data, released this week, confirms what earlier surveys have strongly hinted: virtually half of recent births in the U.S. are minorities. We are becoming a more globalized nation than most Americans have experienced in their lifetimes. The great demographic change has potential long term benefits for our population growth in terms of our economic competitiveness in the international marketplace. But these changes, coming so quickly and evolving from the "bottom up" of our age structure, may exacerbate existing cultural generation gaps, as older, largely white generations may be slow to recognize the promise of this change, according to the author.

[Note: contains copyrighted material].

http://www.brookings.edu/opinions/2011/0826_census_race_frey.aspx [HTML format, various paging].

Item#2

Be Wary of North Korea's Charm Offensive. The Heritage Foundation. Bruce Klingner. August 29, 2011.

Pyongyang is driven to its latest iteration of outreach by economic necessities that it perceives can best be fulfilled through diplomatic means. North Korea's quest for food aid and economic benefits will moderate the regime's behavior for the near term. Failure to achieve those objectives, however, will lead Pyongyang to resort to provocative actions once again. Therefore, even as the U.S. remains open to diplomacy, it must retain sufficient defenses against the multifaceted North Korean security threat. The Obama Administration should affirm an unequivocal commitment to defending Asian allies by maintaining the threefold U.S. promise of extended deterrence comprised of forward-deployed conventional forces, missile defense, and the nuclear umbrella, according to the report.

[Note: contains copyrighted material].

http://thf_media.s3.amazonaws.com/2011/pdf/wm3344.pdf [PDF format, 3 pages].

Item#3

Boomer Retirement: Headwinds for U.S. Equity Markets? Federal Reserve Bank of San Francisco. Zheng Liu and Mark M. Spiegel. August 22, 2011.

Historical data indicate a strong relationship between the age distribution of the U.S. population and stock market performance. A key demographic trend is the aging of the baby boom generation. As they reach retirement age, they are likely to shift from buying stocks to selling their equity holdings to finance retirement. Statistical models suggest that this shift could be a factor holding down equity valuations over the next two decades, say the authors.

[Note: contains copyrighted material].

<http://www.frbsf.org/publications/economics/letter/2011/el2011-26.pdf> [PDF format, 5 pages].

Item#4

China and India, 2025: A Comparative Assessment. RAND Corporation. Charles Wolf, Jr. et al. August 22, 2011.

China and India, the world's two most populous countries, will exercise increasing influence in international affairs in the coming decades, and each country's role on the world stage will be affected by the progress that it makes and by the competition and cooperation that develop between them. The study focuses on the progress China and India seem likely to achieve from 2010 through 2025 in four domains: demography, macroeconomics, science and technology, and defense spending and procurement.

[Note: contains copyrighted material].

http://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/monographs/2011/RAND_MG1009.pdf [PDF format, 171 pages].

Item#5

Global Natural Gas Potential. Council on Foreign Relations. Toni Johnson. August 24, 2011.

With world demand for energy growing, natural gas is increasingly seen as a more environmentally friendly option to coal, an alternative to oil and nuclear, and a more mature technology than alternative energy sources such as solar and wind. While coal is cheap and abundant, it is a major pollutant, particularly of carbon dioxide. Low-emission nuclear power is relatively cheap to operate, but it has become the subject of renewed safety concerns in the wake of the 2011 nuclear accident at the Fukushima plant in Japan. And oil prices and production remain volatile, placing consuming countries reliant on it under considerable economic strain.

[Note: contains copyrighted material].

<http://www.cfr.org/energy/global-natural-gas-potential/p17946> [HTML format, various paging].

Item#6

International Bloggers and Internet Control. Berkman Center for Internet & Society. Hal Roberts et al. August 2011.

The Internet is an increasingly contested space, particularly in countries with repressive governments. Infringements on Internet freedom, particularly through Internet filtering and surveillance, have inspired activists and technologists to develop technological counter-measures, most notably circumvention tools to defeat Internet filters and anonymity tools to help protect user privacy and avoid online surveillance efforts. The widely heralded role of online activism in the Arab spring and the increasing incidence of Internet filtering around the world have spurred greater interest in supporting the development and dissemination of these tools as a means to foster greater freedom of expression online and strengthen the hand of activists demanding political reform, according to the report.

[Note: contains copyrighted material].

http://cyber.law.harvard.edu/sites/cyber.law.harvard.edu/files/International_Bloggers_and_Internet_Control_0.pdf [PDF format, 14 pages].

Item#7

Less-Educated Continue to Lose Jobs in Recovery-Even in Low-Wage Industries. Urban Institute. Pamela J. Loprest and Austin Nichols. August 24, 2011.

In the sluggish recovery, less-educated workers, especially those with a high school degree or less, continue to lose jobs at a substantial rate. This factsheet presents employment changes in the recession and recovery by skill level and industry showing that those with less than a high school degree were hit hardest, even in low wage industries. Gains in the recovery have been concentrated among workers with a college education.

[Note: contains copyrighted material].

<http://www.urban.org/UploadedPDF/412382-Less-Educated-Lose-Jobs-in-Recovery.pdf> [PDF format, 2 pages].

Item#8

Obama Leadership Image Takes a Hit, GOP Ratings Decline. Pew Research Center for the People & the Press. August 25, 2011.

The public is profoundly discontented with conditions in the country, its government, political leadership and several of its major institutions. Fully 79% are dissatisfied with the way things are going in the country. Even more (86%) say they are frustrated or angry with the federal government. Favorable ratings for both political parties are in negative territory and have declined since the beginning of the year.

[Note: contains copyrighted material].

<http://people-press.org/files/legacy-pdf/8-25-11%20Political%20Release.pdf> [PDF format, 61 pages].

Item#9

The Parenting Gap: U.S. Versus China: Americans Want More Pressure On Students, the Chinese Want Less. Pew Global Attitudes Project. August 23, 2011.

With U.S. students underperforming in international assessments, it may not be surprising that almost two-thirds (64%) of Americans say that parents do not put enough pressure on their children to do well in school. That contrasts with the Chinese who feel their students are pushed too hard.

[Note: contains copyrighted material].

<http://pewglobal.org/files/2011/08/Pew-Global-Attitudes-Project-Parental-Pressure-FINAL-August-23-2011.pdf> [PDF format, 7 pages].

Item#10

The Public Health System a Decade After 9/11: Key Successes and Continuing Challenges. RAND Corporation. Jeanne S. Ringel and Jeffrey Wasserman. August 22, 2011.

Despite substantial improvements in public health systems and preparedness since 9/11, significant challenges remain, and a cultural shift is needed to engage all sectors of society in emergency preparedness, response, and recovery, according to the report.

[Note: contains copyrighted material].

http://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/research_briefs/2011/RAND_RB9608.pdf [PDF format, 3 pages].

Item#11

Standard & Poor's Downgrade of U.S. Government Long-Term Debt. Congressional Research Service, Library of Congress. Mark Jickling. August 9, 2011.

On August 5, 2011, Standard & Poor's (S&P) lowered the credit rating of long-term U.S. government debt from AAA (the highest possible rating) to AA+. The downgrade reflects S&P's judgment that (1) the recent Budget Control Act (P.L. 112-25) falls short of what is needed to stabilize the government's fiscal situation and (2) the capacity of Congress and the Administration to deal with the debt has become less stable, effective, and predictable. The effect on consumer and business interest rates depends on what happens to Treasury interest rates. Many private borrowers pay rates that are implicitly or explicitly linked to Treasury rates; if Treasury securities pay higher interest, mortgage, credit card, automobile, and business loans are likely to become more expensive as well. But the downgrade alone need have no effect on those rates.

<http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/misc/R41955.pdf> [PDF format, 10 pages].

Item#12

Transforming the Rural South: A Roadmap to Improving Rural Education. State Collaboration on Reforming Education. August 2011.

The report outlines specific recommendations to improve public education in rural communities in the South. The recommendations are based on research, best practices, and voices from rural communities across Tennessee and throughout the Southeast. The report, released jointly with the Ayers Foundation, Niswonger Foundation, Rural School and Community Trust, and the Tennessee School Boards Association, follows the Southeast Regional Rural Education Summit, which was held in Nashville on July 19-20, 2011.

[Note: contains copyrighted material].

<http://www.tnscore.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/08/SCORE-Rural-Education-Roadmap.pdf> [PDF format, 6 pages].

Item#13

US Immigration Policy since 9/11: Understanding the Stalemate over Comprehensive Immigration Reform. Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars and Migration Policy Institute. Marc R. Rosenblum. August 2011.

The September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks derailed what had seemed to be a turning point in U.S. immigration policy: A move away from the assertive enforcement policies that had held sway since the

mid-1990s. But just days after the U.S. and Mexican presidents had agreed to a framework that included a temporary worker program, legalization, and new border security measures, 9/11 dramatically reshaped the policy debate. The report reviews the history of immigration legislation since then, including new enforcement mandates enacted immediately after the attacks and the unsuccessful efforts to pass comprehensive immigration reform.

[Note: contains copyrighted material].

<http://www.migrationpolicy.org/pubs/RMSG-post-9-11policy.pdf> [PDF format, 23 pages].